



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food and
Nutrition
Service

Mountain
Plains
Region

1244 Speer Boulevard
Denver, CO 80204

Reply to
Attn. of:

SP 94-C-50

NOV 8 1993

Subject:

Emergency Feeding of Children In All School Nutrition Programs

To:

STATE AGENCY DIRECTORS
(Special Nutrition Programs)

- Colorado ED, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri ED,
Montana OPI, Nebraska ED, North Dakota,
South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming ED

This memorandum conveys USDA policy for the emergency feeding of children in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), or for free milk through the Special Milk Program (SMP). This guidance sets out means by which institutions that operate these programs may make them more readily available to enrolled children whose households have been the victims of disasters like that caused by Hurricane Andrew in 1992. This guidance helps streamline eligibility determinations in such emergency situations but does not in any way expand these particular programs, which are not emergency feeding programs per se.

Under normal circumstances, households must apply for free and reduced price meals for their children. However, in cases where an application cannot be obtained from a household, determining officials may implement the policies that are already in place to provide children with free or reduced price meals. First, officials may complete an application on the child's behalf when a household known to be needy does not apply for benefits for its children. Second, following procedures set forth in SP 94-C-45, the policy for documenting homeless children's eligibility may of course be used in a situation where a disaster has rendered a number of children homeless who attend an institution. Under this policy, when there are large numbers of homeless children making it impractical to complete an application for each child, officials may keep a list to document free and reduced price eligibility. The list would consist of each child's name, the dates benefits begin and end, the child's residence (shelter, etc.) and the official's signature. Determining officials are responsible for updating the list as children enroll and withdraw or a household's circumstances change. Also, many households in a disaster area may have been approved for emergency food stamps. All children in households certified for food stamps continue to be categorically eligible for free meals or free milk.

It is not necessary for any area suffering from a disaster to have been designated an "official" or "federal" disaster area in order for the above provisions to be utilized. However, when such a designation has been made, determining officials have additional flexibility in treating households from the disaster area which move in with any other household in that city, or another city or another State. In such cases, only the household size and income from the household in crisis need be included in the eligibility determination. The household size and income from the host family need not be included on the application or otherwise considered in the eligibility determination.

Determining officials should review eligibility determinations made under these various crisis procedures every 45 days to evaluate the household's circumstances.

If you have any questions please contact our office.

Ann C. Hector

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Regional Director
Special Nutrition Programs